

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following claims will replace all prior versions of the claims in this application (in the unlikely event that no claims follow herein, the previously pending claims will remain):

1. (Original) A soap composition comprising in the range from 60 to 99% by weight of the composition of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C8-C24 fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched CG-C24 fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
2. (Original) A soap composition according to claim 1 comprising 25 to 75% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C8-C24, preferably C12-C22, fatty acids.
3. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~either one of claims 1 and 2~~ claim 1 comprising 25 to 75% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched chain C8-C24, preferably C, 2-C22, fatty acids.
4. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the alkali metal soap straight chain fatty acids comprise greater than 80% by weight of C12-C, 8 fatty acids.
5. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the alkali metal soap straight chain fatty acids comprise in the range from 55 to 90% by weight of CIS-CIE fatty acids.
6. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the alkali metal soap branched chain fatty acids comprise greater than 70% by weight of C, 6-C22 fatty acids.
7. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the branched chain fatty acids comprise isostearic acid.

8. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the straight chain fatty acids are derived from palm kernel oil and palm oil.
9. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 comprising less than 10% by weight of alkali metal soap of unsaturated fatty acids, based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
10. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 comprising substantially no additional stabilizer and/or preservative and/or cheating agent.
11. (Currently Amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 having a ~~colour~~ color stability of greater than 50%.
12. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 having an ~~odour~~ odor stability of greater than 50%.
13. (Currently amended) A soap composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 in the form of a soap tablet or bar.
14. (Original) A process of making a soap bar or tablet which comprises extruding a soap composition comprising in the range from 70 to 95% by weight of the composition of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C8-C24 fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched C8-C24 fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
15. (Original) A soap tablet or bar comprising in the range from (a) 70 to 95% by weight of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C8-C24 fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched C8-C24 fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition, (b) 0 to 5% by weight of free fatty acids, (c) 0.1 to 1% by weight of salt, and (d) 5 to 20% by weight of water, and (e) 0.1 to 2% by weight of polyol.

16. (Currently amended) A soap tablet or bar according to claim 15 having at least one or more, and preferably all, of (i) a total mush value in the range from 5 to 25 g/50 cm<sup>2</sup>, (ii) a lather volume in the range from 60 to 150 ml, (iii) a ~~eeleour~~ color stability in the range from 70 to 95%, and (iv) an ~~eeleour~~ odor stability of greater than 70%.

17. (Currently amended) The use of alkali metal soap of branched C8-C24 fatty acids to improve the ~~eeleour~~ color stability and/or ~~eeleour~~ odor stability and/or lather volume of a soap composition.

18. (Original) The use of alkali metal soap of branched C8-C24 fatty acids to reduce the amount of stabilizer and/or preservative and/or chelating agent required in a soap composition.